

## Foods with Folic Acid

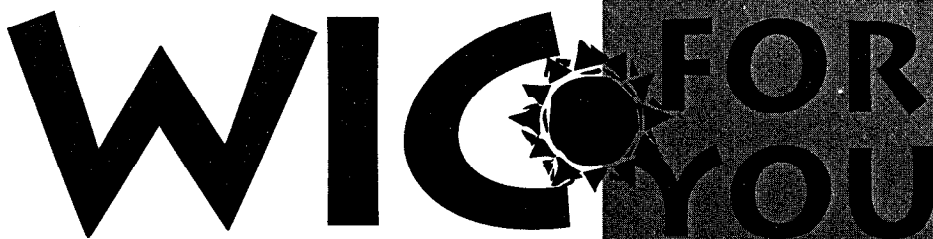


Make a note of your favorites.  
Buy them next time you shop.

- spinach
- mustard greens
- turnip greens
- broccoli
- chicken liver
- beef liver
- cooked dried beans
- peanuts
- sunflower seeds
- breakfast cereals
- orange juice

### What You and Your Family Eat Does Matter

Remember — what you eat directly affects your health and the health of your future children. If you plan to have a baby or could get pregnant, talk with your doctor now about taking a multivitamin with folic acid. Encourage your family to eat folic-acid rich foods to improve their health, too.



Texas Department of Health

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# Folic Acid Helps Prevent Birth Defects



**Folic acid is a vitamin that helps** prevent very serious birth defects of the brain and spinal cord. For this reason, women of childbearing age (15 - 44 years old) need to make sure they get enough folic acid every day. Folic acid is most effective at preventing birth defects early in pregnancy; that's why it is so important for all women who might get pregnant to get enough folic acid. If you wait until after you know you are pregnant, it could be too late!

### How do you get folic acid?



#### Folic Acid from Vitamin Pills

All women of childbearing age should take a multivitamin pill each day, in addition to eating a healthy diet. The vitamin pill should have 400 micrograms of folic acid.

If you don't take a multivitamin, you can get 400 micrograms of folic acid from just one serving of Total™ or Product 19™ cereal.



#### Folic Acid from Foods

A healthy diet is one that has a variety of foods. The Food Guide Pyramid tells you how many servings of breads and cereals, fruits, vegetables, milk and meat you need each day. But the real key to variety is eating different types of foods each day. In addition to eating a variety of foods, make sure you eat plenty of foods rich in folic acid. These foods are listed on the left side of this page.



# Ask WIC?

continued from page 1

**Q** How does folic acid help the rest of my family stay healthy?

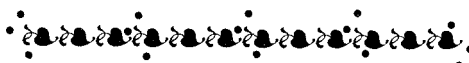
**A** Folic acid may help prevent heart disease. A diet rich in folic acid is a good habit to begin early in life.

**Q** Do men and children need to take a vitamin with 400 micrograms of folic acid?

**A** No. They don't need to take a vitamin pill each day to get their folic acid. They can get enough just by eating a healthy diet.

## ☐ Folic Acid in Fortified Grains

Because folic acid is so important, laws now require food companies to add folic acid to many grain products. This includes bread, breakfast cereal, most flour, corn meal, pasta, and rice. Most breads and cereals with added folic acid give some, but not all of the folic acid women need each day to prevent birth defects.



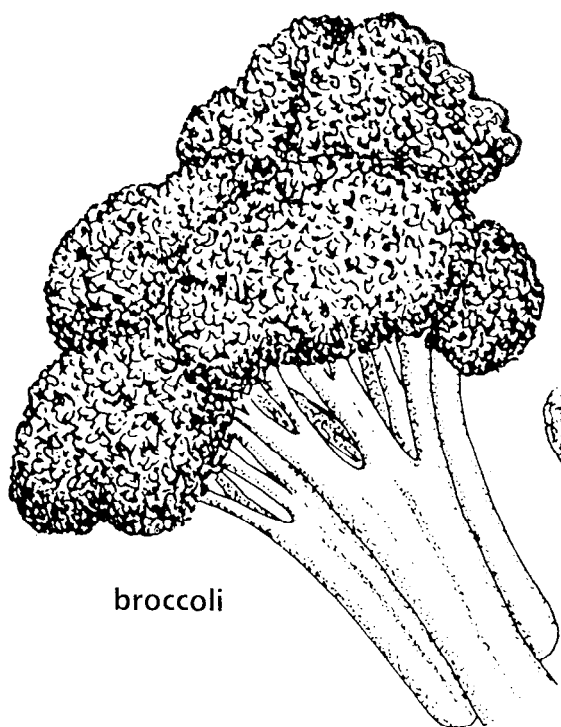
## Don't Overdo a Good Thing

Like other vitamins, too much folic acid can be harmful. Women should only take one multivitamin each day. Doctors may tell some women to take higher amounts of folic acid for medical reasons. Be sure to follow your doctor's advice.

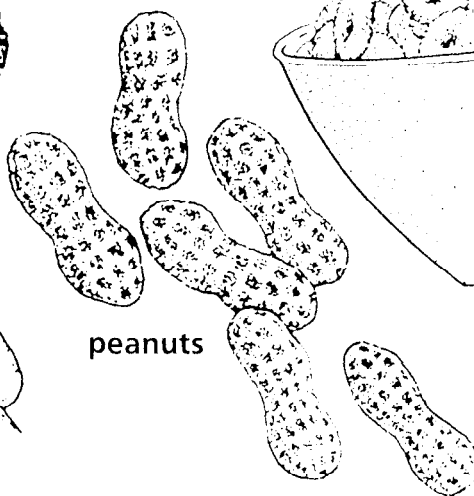
Something else you can do to have a healthy baby: Breastfeed! Mother's milk is the perfect food for your baby. (Of course it is, it comes from mom!) Ask your WIC nutritionist for more information.

# JUST FOR KIDS

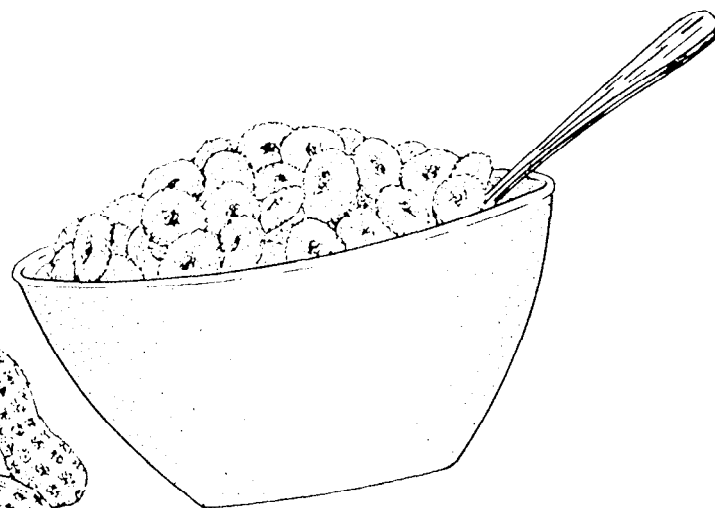
Color your favorite folic acid foods.



broccoli



peanuts



breakfast cereals